

15 June 2011

Fort Detrick hosts Army's first Net Zero Workshop

By Fort Detrick Public Affairs staff

FORT DETRICK, Md. - Army leaders met here for day one of the first Net Zero Workshop, June 14. The three-day conference brings together leaders from over 20 installations chosen by the Army to discuss sustainability practices and share information to better reduce energy and water usage as well as the amount of waste created.

As part of the Army's overall effort to conserve precious resources, net zero installations will consume only as much energy or water as they produce and eliminate solid waste to landfills. Instead of thinking about today, thinking about 50 years from now when our children and their families are here.

"I tell my staff all the time that if there is one thing that I can leave my stamp on and be known for as a Garrison Commander at Fort Detrick it is the culture of sustainability that has been developed here...thinking of things in the long run," said Col. Judith Robinson, commander, U.S. Army Garrison Commander Fort Detrick, during her opening remarks to the crowd.

Lt. Gen. Rick Lynch, commanding general, U.S. Army Installation Management Command and assistant chief of Staff for Installation Management, was also in attendance, and said, "Because the installations who are attending the conference raised their hands to be a part of the pilot, that they are now high on the radar at the Army, Department of Defense and national levels."

Lynch told the crowd achieving net zero success is all about attitude, innovation, fiscal responsibility and the aggression to actively pursue information about net zero efforts and successes, sharing them with others. Lynch specifically mentioned the website garrisoncommand.com was established as a route to share information, thoughts and processes with other garrisons, stressing those in attendance utilize the site.

Katherine Hammack, assistant secretary of the Army (Installations, Energy and Environment), Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army, stressed the vital nature of reducing energy consumption, and told the attendees about a 2009 exercise that demonstrated how the Army is dependent on civilian electric grids, water systems and waste management systems, all of which have the possibility to deeply affect our individual missions and abilities.

"Now is the time to utilize the authorities given by Congress and other resources to pay for new and innovative programs to reach the goal," said Hammack. Hammack told the crowd the federal

government consumes a total of 1percent of total energy in the United States, and 80 percent of that usage is from the Department of Defense.

“Of this the Army using 21percent. It’s time to change that way we operate. Net zero installations are leading the way,” she said. Among others speaking at the opening day events were Nancy Sutley, chair, White House Council on Environmental Quality and Charles Zimmerman, vice president of International Design and Construction, Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.

Following lunch, Bobi Garrett, senior vice president of Outreach, Planning and Analysis, National Renewable Energy Laboratory, gave a presentation and took questions entitled “Strategic Planning, First Step to Achieving Net Zero” and took questions from the crowd.

The final panel of the day was a discussion of legal and environmental considerations led by Colleen Rathbun, associate deputy general Counsel, Office of the Army General Counsel.

Following a cake cutting to celebrate the 236th birthday of the U.S. Army, the attendees took a tour of the Fort Detrick energy, water and waste facilities to learn what initiatives and innovations Fort Detrick has implemented heading toward a net zero outcome.

(Read More – Day Two)

Related Links

- **Army.mil: Environment News**
- **STAND-TO!: Net Zero**
- **Assistant Secretary of the Army for Installations, Energy and Environment**
- **Net Zero - A force multiplier (PDF download)**
- **Net Zero waste goal becoming a reality at JBLM**
- **Private investment key to 'Net Zero' initiative**
- **Fort Carson achieves Net Zero status**
- **Plans underway for fort to reach 'Net Zero' waste by 2020**

Net Zero Workshop tackles tough questions

*By Nick Minecci,
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FORT DETRICK, Md., June 17, 2011 -- Representatives from U.S. Army Garrisons around the world continued the second day of the inaugural U.S. Army Net Zero Workshop, here, June 15, 2011, with in-depth presentations and discussions about the best way to reach the goal of being net zero.

As the Army places maximum effort to conserve resources, being a net zero installation means it will consume only as much energy or water as they produce and eliminate solid waste to landfills.



The Honorable Ms. Katherine Hammack, Assistant Secretary of the Army for Installations, Energy and Environment addresses representatives of U.S. Army Garrisons from around the world during the inaugural U.S. Army Net Zero Workshop. The Army conducted the three-day workshop for net zero pilot installations at Fort Detrick, Maryland from June 14 - 16, 2011. The workshop provided a venue for pilot installations to come together and share ideas and resources. Photo by Kristine Kingery

Personnel broke into three groups representing an energy track, water track and waste track, presenting initiatives each base has implemented, or is planning to, and the challenges each face. Becoming a net zero installation differs for each track.

“One of the biggest things people have to realize is every installation is unique, and there is no cookie-cutter approach that will work to achieve a net zero,” said Mark Dressler, Fort Detrick’s Solid Waste Manager during his presentation to those attending the discussion of waste management.

Having the different groups break out and hold these in-depth discussions is important according to Richard G. Kidd IV, deputy assistant secretary of the Army (Energy & Sustainability), Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army Installations, Energy & Environment, because it, “establishes a collaborative network to accelerate the learning process across the Army,” he said.

Kidd added that the Army has learned from the private sector how important it is to take down the obstacles that prevent sharing of knowledge, and to give the installations involved in the net zero process all the tools they need.

Following the morning presentations, the attendees took part in track-specific technical sessions, panel discussions with leaders from across the Department of Defense, Department of Energy and various other government agencies.

The U.S. Army Garrisons represented at the three-day workshop represent installations of all sizes and functions, and from around the world.

Representing the Army’s pilot net zero energy installations at the workshop are:

- Fort Detrick, Md.
- Fort Hunter Liggett, Calif.

- Kwajalein Atoll, Republic of the Marshall Islands
- Parks Reserve Forces Training Area, Calif.
- Sierra Army Depot, Calif.
- West Point, N.Y.
- Oregon Army National Guard, Ore.

These installations are working to produce as much energy on site as it uses, over the course of a year.

Representing the pilot net zero water installations are:

- Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md.
- Camp Rilea, Ore.
- Fort Buchanan, Puerto Rico
- Fort Riley, Kan.
- Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash.
- Tobyhanna Army Depot, Pa.

Net zero water installations are working to limit the consumption of freshwater resources and returns water back to the same watershed so as not to deplete the groundwater and surface water resources of that region in quantity and quality over the course of a year.

Representing the Army's pilot net zero waste installations at the workshop are:

- Fort Detrick, Md.
- Fort Hood, Texas
- Fort Hunter Liggett, Calif.
- Fort Polk, La.
- Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash.
- U.S. Army Garrison, Grafenwoehr, Germany

A net zero waste installation reduces, reuses, and recovers waste streams, converting them to resource values with zero landfill over the course of a year.

Additionally, two other installations, Fort Bliss, Texas, and Fort Carson, Colo., volunteered to be integrated net zero installations. A net zero installation combines three interrelated components: net zero energy, net zero water, and net zero waste.

Related Links

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